(v) States have been advised to coordinate and liase with the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence Armed Forces. Customs and Coast Guards authorities for better enforcement of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.

(vi) Through the State Governments action is being taken to strengthen anti-poaching measures by providing arms and ammunition to forest guards, improving their communication capabilities, conducting raids on the basis of information about illegal trade in wildlife produce etc.

(vii) A programme for mitigation of the man-animal conflict has been taken up under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme, "Eco-development of areas in and around National Park and Sanctuaries". During 1991-92—Rs. 5.75 lakhs have been provided as Central assistance under this scheme.

Destruction caused by water hyacinth Plant

4090. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the water Hyacinth Popularly known at Jalkumbhi is fast destroying many lakes in the State of Madhya Pradesh particularly in Bhopal city;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) what action Government have taken or proposed to take to get rid of Jalkumbhi from the lakes of Madhya Pradesh particularly in Bhopal?

THE MINISTRY OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) and (b) Water hyacinth is found in several lakes of the country, including those in Madhya Pradesh and in Bhopal city.

(c) Under the Wetlands Programme, financial assistance of Rs. 21.89 lakhs has been provided to the State Government of Madhya Pradesh for control of noxious aquatic weeds including water hyacinth in Bhoj wetland of Bhopal District.

Meeting of Montreal protocol signatories

4091. SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY:

SHRI BISHAMBHAR NATH PANDEY:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India was reluctant to chair the meeting of Montreal Protocol Signatories held in Copenhagen on 23rd November, 1992; and

(b) if so what were the reasons theerfor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Depletion of the Forests cover of Western Ghats

4092. DR. BAPU KALDATE:

SHRI VISHWASRAO RAMRAO PATIL:

SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that every year five per cent of forests of Western Ghats are destroyed or thinned into grasslands;

(b) if so, what action Government are taking in this regard;

(c) whether Government are aware that further expansion of grass-

land would land to heavy exploitation of rain forests by farmers; and

(d) if so, what initiative Government took to protect forest cover?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) No, Sir. The comparison of vegetation cover based on satellite imageries for the period 1985-87 and 1987-89 shows no significant decrease in forest cover of the States comprising Western Ghats.

(b) and (c) Question does not arise.

(d) The steps taken to protect forest cover of Western Ghats are:

(i) Enactment and strict implementation of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980.

(ii) Assisting State Government and providing infrastructure for implementation of Central and State forest laws.

(iii) Planning Commission make special provision for the Western Ghat areas under the Scheme 'Integrated Development of Western Ghats".

Tehri Dam Project

4093. SHRI JAGDISH PRASAD MATHUR: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Tehri Hydro Development Corporation is restricted to do rock blasting connected with the Tehri Dam project;

(b) whether rock blasting is permitted for other projects underway in the same region, and seismic belt; and

(c) if so, the reasons for imposing such restriction particularly on the Tehri Dam Project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) to (c) While the Ministry on Environment and Forests has not restricted rock blasting connected with the Tehri Dam Project, the Project Authorities had suspended blasting activities at the project pending review of the safety aspects of the Dam. In environmental clearances accorded for other projects underway in the area, no specific permission for rock blasting was required to be given by this Ministry.

Green Forests

4094. SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA: SHRI MOHAMMED AFZAL alias MEEM AFZAL:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that lush green forests were brought down to make way for setting up the Piparwar Open Cast Coal Mine Project; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) and (b) A proposal for diversion of 186.51 ha. of forest land for Piparwar Open Cast Coal Project has been received from Bihar State Government under Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. The forest area involved supports degraded forest and it contains scattered coppice growth of miscellaneous species. So far diversion of 13.11 ha. of forest land has been formally approved by the Central Government under Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980.